

MICHIGAN COURT OF APPEALS



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The Constitution of 1963 provides for a court of appeals, whose jurisdiction is provided by law and the practice and procedure prescribed by rules of the supreme court. The court of appeals currently has 28 judges, who are nominated and elected at nonpartisan elections from four districts as provided by Act 190 of 1993.

The legislature may increase the number of judges and alter the districts from which they are elected. When it first began operation in 1965, the bench of the Court of Appeals was comprised of nine judges. In 1969, the legislature increased the size of the bench to 12 judges, and further increases occurred in 1974 (18 judges), in 1988 (24 judges), and in 1993 (28 judges).

A candidate for the court of appeals must be a lawyer, under 70 years of age, a qualified elector, and a resident of the district in which he or she is running.

Judges are elected for six-year terms. Their salaries are set by the legislature. Every two years a chief judge is selected by the supreme court. In addition to hearing cases, the chief judge performs administrative duties and other assignments required by the supreme court.

The court of appeals hears civil and criminal cases.

Three-judge panels of the court of appeals hear cases in Lansing, Detroit, Grand Rapids, and Marquette. The panels are rotated to encourage statewide uniformity in rulings by eliminating the likelihood of conflicting legal philosophies developing in specific geographical areas. The procedure for hearing cases is similar to that followed by the supreme court. The decision of a panel of the court of appeals is final except in those cases where the decision is reviewed by the supreme court.

